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a feeling of affection the ever recurring "From thence they proceeded" of Xenophon's *Anabasis*. Nor is the situation greatly improved by the author's frequent desire to feature "the beauties of a prodigal nature" (p. 54), and to describe minutely the animal life of the plains in precivilized times. Buffalo become especially wearisome. On fifty-seven out of two hundred and thirty-seven pages the diligent indexer has found them in sufficient numbers to justify mention.

An appendix of more than fifty pages reproduces the *Journal* for the spring and summer of 1843 of Captain Nathan Boone, a son of Daniel Boone. In this year Captain Boone as an officer of the Dragoons explored a considerable part of the territory drained by the Arkansas River and its branches, and in the *Journal* he records the daily activities of his party. The document contains extensive, and possibly valuable, observations on the geological formation, vegetation, and game of the region, but on the whole is rather a tedious performance.

JOHN D. HICKS

The Political History of the Public Lands from 1840 to 1862.

By GEORGE M. STEPHENSON, PH. D. (Boston, Richard G. Badger, 1917. 296 p.)

In this interesting and valuable study the author has attempted three things: (1) "to trace the history of the public land legislation in Congress;" (2) "to portray the sentiment of the different sections of the country relative to the disposal of the public domain;" and (3) "to estimate the influence of the public lands on the political and legislative situation in general in the period from 1840 to 1862." The study which has been accepted as a doctoral dissertation at Harvard, is based upon extensive research, particularly in the *Congressional Globe* and contemporary newspapers, the former being the principal source for the legislative history and the latter for reflecting the sentiment of the country. The work indicates a careful reading of many newspapers of the period in all sections of the country, the files in the Harvard College Library, the Boston Public Library, the Library of Congress, and the libraries of the state historical societies of Wisconsin and Minnesota being used for this purpose. This

volume will be of particular interest to readers in Minnesota because of the extensive use made of Minnesota newspapers and the frequency of footnote references to this material. The *Congressional Globe* and the newspapers, extensive as the list of the latter is, by no means constitute the only materials covered by the researches of the author. Other materials consist of contemporary correspondence, memoirs, and diaries. The reader is impressed with the careful and diligent work of the author, and the frequency of footnote references makes it possible to check the accuracy of his conclusions. One chapter is devoted to bibliography, but this is not critical as regards secondary material.

The work is divided into fifteen chapters, the first six of which deal with the history of the public lands to the beginning of national homestead agitation. Distribution, preëmption, and graduation, the bearing of these upon the tariff and other questions of the time, and the attitude of the sections towards these various phases of the public land question are carefully traced out by the author. The hostility of the South towards homestead legislation, the connection between the homestead bill and the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and the relation of the homestead question to the election of 1860 are all considered. These chapters constitute a refreshing and, in some ways, a new view of old and familiar topics. The importance of the public lands in our national history has not until recently been adequately considered. That they had a very great importance cannot be doubted; that the importance might be over emphasized in a special study of this kind must also be recognized. The reader of this volume has the feeling that the author has adequately brought out the significance of the public lands without giving them undue importance, particularly as regards the relation of the homestead-movement to the Kansas-Nebraska bill and the election of 1860.

The book is readable and the text is accompanied by several maps showing the votes in Congress on various phases of public land legislation. Some minor errors have crept in, but these in no way mar the many good features of the book, which is a distinct contribution to our knowledge of this interesting and important phase of our history.

WILSON P. SHORTRIDGE